

Activities for Autism Awareness Month

Infants (Birth–12 months): “Belonging routines”

Activity 1: Hello the Same Way (Predictable Greeting Routine)

What you need: Your regular greeting song + one simple hand motion (wave or gentle pat).

How to do it:

1. Use the *same* greeting each day for the month (same words, same rhythm).
2. Pause and watch the baby's response (smile, kick, vocalize, look away).
3. Narrate kindly: “You’re telling me you’re ready” or “You’re telling me you need a break.”

Why it matters: Predictable routines support regulation and inclusion in group care.

Activity 2: Choice Touch (Yes/No Body Cues)

What you need: Two safe fabric items (soft cloth + textured cloth).

How to do it:

1. Show both items: “Soft or bumpy?”
2. Offer one near the baby’s hands; pause.
3. If the baby turns away/fusses, calmly say: “No thank you. Let’s try the other one.”

How to show babies: Keep voice gentle and treat “no” as normal and respected.

Toddlers (1–2 years): “Communication counts”

Activity 1: “Show Me” Communication Board (Simple Picture Choices)

What you need: Photos/icons for snack, water, potty/diaper, outside, book, break.

How to create it: Put 6 pictures on a page (laminate if you can).

How to do it:

1. Model pointing: “You can tell me—book or outside?”
2. Accept any communication: pointing, reaching, vocalizing, signing, words.
3. Say what you see: “You chose outside. Let’s go!”

Why it matters: Supports communication in many forms (not just speech).



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Activity 2: “First / Then” Helper Strip

What you need: A strip with two boxes: FIRST / THEN + 2 pictures.

How to do it:

1. Show: “First diaper, then bubbles.”
2. Keep it quick and consistent.
3. Celebrate success: “You did first—now then!”

Tip: This is great for transitions all month long.

Preschool (3–5 years): “All brains learn differently”

Activity 1: “Different Ways to Talk” Circle Time

What you need: A small poster that says: “We can talk with words, signs, pictures, pointing, and devices.”

How to do it:

1. Say: “Some people talk with words. Some people talk with pictures. All are real talking.”
2. Practice as a group: everyone points to a picture to choose a song (instead of shouting answers).
3. Repeat the message: “We listen with our eyes and ears.”

Why it matters: Builds acceptance and inclusive habits.

Activity 2: “Calm Corner Build Day” (Kid-Friendly)

What you need: Cozy spot + 3 calm tools (book, stuffed animal, sensory bottle, breathing card).

How to do it:

1. Introduce it as a **everyone space**, not a “naughty spot.”
2. Teach: “When your body feels too big (mad/wiggly/sad), you can choose a calm tool.”
3. Practice when kids are calm: “Let’s try 3 balloon breaths together.”

Tip: Use visuals and simple steps (preschoolers love “choose 1 tool”).

Activity 3: Storytime + “Kind Class Promises”

What you do:

1. Read a book that highlights differences and belonging.



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2. Ask: "What helps friends feel safe at school?"

3. Make 3 promises on chart paper:

- "We give people space."
- "We use kind words."
- "We can ask: 'Do you want to play?'"

Inclusion tie-in: Designing environments intentionally supports all learners.

School Age (6–12 years): "Acceptance is an action"

Activity 1: Neurodiversity "Myth vs Fact"

What you need: 6 statement cards (2 myths, 4 facts).

Examples:

- Fact: "Some people use AAC (devices/pictures) to communicate."
- Fact: "Some people need headphones or quiet breaks to learn."
- Myth: "Everyone should look at your eyes to listen."

How to do it:

1. Kids sort cards into "Myth" or "Fact."
2. Discuss: "What's a kinder, more helpful rule instead?"

Why it matters: Autism acceptance emphasizes changing environments and attitudes.

Activity 2: "Make Our Classroom More Friendly" Inclusion Audit

What you need: A checklist kids can help complete:

- Is there a quiet option?
- Are directions shown in pictures *and* words?
- Can you choose seating (chair, floor, standing)?
- Is there a predictable schedule posted?

How to do it:

1. Small groups walk around and mark "Yes/Not yet."
2. Groups propose 1 improvement (realistic and kind).
3. Implement one change that week.

Why it matters: Inclusion is something educators design on purpose.

Activity 3: "Communication Challenge"



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Goal: Learn that communication can be hard sometimes, and we can be patient.

How to do it (no pretending to be autistic):

1. Pair students.
2. Partner A explains how to build a simple LEGO shape **without touching pieces** (only words).
3. Switch roles.
4. Reflect: "What helped? (clear steps, repeating, showing examples, patience)"

Connect it: Some people communicate differently; we can support each other by being clear and kind.



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